




Activity #5: Developmental Stages of Writing

Section 2: About Written Expression

Stage	Example
Scribbling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “babbling” of the writing process • Begins as random and continues to a more controlled process • Usually large, circular marks • Does not yet resemble “writing” 	
Drawing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawings begin to emerge as scribbling becomes more controlled • Begins to hold meaning for the child • Drawings begin to stand for writing and children begin to verbally label their drawings, e.g. “That’s mommy.” • Children may begin to “read” their drawings as if there are words on them 	
Letter-Like Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children become aware of the different features of print (lines, zigzags, loops) • Begin to make shapes that resemble letters but are not actually letters. • May use many letter-like marks that are totally unique creations 	

Children may move up and down through these stages. It is not a linear progression.

Letter Strings

- Letters begin to emerge from the letter-like forms
- Writing contains long strings of letters in random order



Inventive Spelling

- Writing may continue to include letter-like forms, but letters begin to represent a whole word
- Usually words are represented by the first letter of the word
- May begin to use punctuation

(Note: The child who drew this picture and labeled it as shown here explained to the teacher that he was drawing a "four-eye guy.")



Conventional Spelling

- Children are making more letter/sound connections
- More vowels begin to appear
- Writing more closely resembles "adult" writing



Children may move up and down through these stages. It is not a linear progression.